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Introduction

Distant strangers matter. Our lives continue to be centered on the intimacy of face-to-face relationships with family, friends, and loved ones. At the same time, we are constantly exposed to initiatives and organizations that try to get us interested in the fate of geographically and culturally distant people. An established not-for-profit industry working for the welfare of such distant populations is a ubiquitous presence in the public spaces of contemporary Western societies. If nothing else, its appeals for donations intrude with some regularity into our everyday lives. So do the images of distant people in distress whom we are urged to support.

Should we decide to express our support, we are given a menu of choices. We can do that in different ways – through practices individual or collective, public or private, organized or spontaneous. Sometimes the instigator is an explicitly political organization that orchestrates lobbying, advocacy, or public protests. In other cases, what we do is limited to transfers of cash or donations in kind to distressed populations. Concern for distant strangers can also express itself in practices of selective consumption, such as the boycotts of products that are thought to cause suffering, or the preferential consumption of other products, the proceeds of which are seen as enhancing these strangers' welfare. At a minimum, we may develop a sustained interest in media reports of distant suffering and injustice.

Why and how did such practices become an integral part of modern life? This is the general question this book addresses. It explains our persisting involvement of various degrees and forms with the fate of humans at a distance as the end result of complex historical processes. These processes culminated with the crystallization of an enduring institutional model of political practice that I call long-distance advocacy. It is this model that forms the institutional backbone of contemporary humanitarian engagement with distant strangers. And the central argument I make here is that the model emerged from the struggles of religious actors in the course of European imperial expansion overseas.

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Members of distinctively activist religious organizations, starting with the Catholic mendicant orders in the sixteenth century, were the pioneers who "invented" the institutional model of long-distance advocacy. They did not do this intentionally. In the course of their evangelizing work in overseas possessions of Iberian empires, however, such religious specialists became increasingly preoccupied with an issue they could ill afford to disregard: the harsh and inhumane treatment to which European settlers submitted new imperial "others" in the Caribbean and in America. Moved to protect the welfare of new and potential converts to Christianity, they engaged in various political activities, appealing to the heads of political and religious authorities in Europe: the monarchs in Spain and Portugal and the pope in Rome.

This series of denunciations of the abuses of Iberian imperialism was the first milestone in the history of early modern long-distance advocacy. Later, members of Protestant organizations, most notably Quakers, took the same road in their effort to abolish the enslavement and trade of Africans in European colonies. The international antislavery movement that they initiated ushered in a crucial stage in the history of long-distance advocacy in which it acquired its distinctively modern organizational patterns. For this was a movement that, especially in its British version, involved for the first time a critical mass of lay supporters for a distant cause – that of ending the colonial slave trade. So enduring and so influential was the antislavery movement that it diffused a model of action and thought that is still with us today.

HISTORY'S TENTACLES

The approach I choose, then, is to understand the current state of affairs through a historical lens: as the outcome of deep historical processes, of causal forces in the past and of cumulative developments that have all combined to shape of our current social world. I have chosen this approach deliberately – as an analytically fruitful way to enrich our conversation on the social foundations of moral involvement.

There are several possible ways to approach the larger question of how and why people engage in activities oriented meaningfully toward the well-being of geographically and culturally distant strangers. Thus the question of the moral relevance of distance – and of how people at a distance should and do matter morally – has been addressed by political philosophers who have produced important arguments about compassion and indifference, about universalisms and particularisms, about moral cosmopolitanism and parochialisms.[1]

[1] See, for example, Joseph A. Amato, *Victims and Values: A History and a Theory of Suffering* (New York: Praeger, 1990); Lawrence Blum, "Compassion," in *Explaining Emotions*, ed. Amélie Oksenberg Rorty (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980); Joshua Cohen, ed. *For Love of Country: Debating the Limits of Patriotism* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1996); Richard Dagger, *Civic Virtues: Rights, Citizenship, and Republican Liberalism* (New York: Oxford University

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While these works examine the ideological and philosophical foundations of solidarity and moral affiliation across space, empirically oriented researchers have studied important recent cases of popular mobilization oriented toward the rights of distant populations: instances of what Dieter Rucht has called "distant-issue movements." Representative examples include, the international movement against the apartheid system in South Africa, the movement for solidarity with victims of persecution in Central America, the transnational support for the Zapatista movement in Mexico, the campaigns against sweatshops and for labor rights in the global South, the activities in support of insurgent trade unions in communist Eastern Europe, and the boycott of baby formula for its negative impact on health in the Third World.[2]

Press, 1997); Abram de Swaan, "Widening Circles of Identification: Emotional Concerns in Sociogenetic Perspective," *Theory, Culture & Society* 12, no. 2 (1995); William A. Galston, "Cosmopolitan Altruism," in *Altruism*, ed. Ellen Frankel Paul, Fred D. Miller, Jr., and Jeffrey Paul (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993); Alan H. Goldman, "The Moral Significance of National Boundaries," *Midwest Studies in Philosophy* 7 (1982); Robert Goodin, "What Is So Special about Our Fellow Countrymen?," *Ethics* 98 (1988); Otto Kallscheuer, "'And Who Is My Neighbor?': Moral Sentiments, Proximity, Humanity," *Social Research* 62, no. 1 (1995); Anthony Pagden, "Stoicism, Cosmopolitanism, and the Legacy of European Imperialism," *Constellations* 7, no. 1 (2000); Thomas Pogge, *World Poverty and Human Rights: Cosmopolitan Responsibilities and Reforms*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2008); Michael Walzer, *Thick and Thin: Moral Argument at Home and Abroad* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1994).

[2] See Dieter Rucht, "Distant Issue Movements in Germany: Empirical Description and Theoretical Reflections," in *Globalizations and Social Movements: Culture, Power, and the Transnational Public Sphere*, ed. John A. Guidry, Michael D. Kennedy, and Mayer N. Zald (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2000). On the anti-apartheid movement, see Donald R. Culverson, *Contesting Apartheid: U.S. Activism, 1960–1987* (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1999); Wouter Goedertier, "The Quest for Transnational Authority, the Anti-Apartheid Movements of the European Community," *Revue Belge de Philologie & d'Histoire* 89, no. 3/4 (2011); Rob Skinner, *The Foundations of Anti-Apartheid: Liberal Humanitarians and Transnational Activists in Britain and the United States, c.1919–64* (Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010); Sarah A. Soule, "Situational Effects on Political Altruism: The Student Divestment Movement in the United States," in *Political Altruism? Solidarity Movements in International Perspective*, ed. Marco Giugni and Florence Passy (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2001); Håkan Thörn, *Anti-Apartheid and the Emergence of a Global Civil Society* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006). On the solidarity movement with Central America, Sharon Erickson Nepstad, *Convictions of the Soul: Religion, Culture, and Agency in the Central America Solidarity Movement* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004); Christian Smith, *Resisting Reagan: The U.S. Central America Peace Movement* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996); Gregory L. Wiltfang and Doug McAdam, "The Costs and Risks of Social Activism: A Study of Sanctuary Movement Activism," *Social Forces* 69, no. 4 (1991). On *Zapatismo*, Josee Johnston and Gordon Laxer, "Solidarity in the Age of Globalization: Lessons from the Anti-MAI and Zapatista Struggles," *Theory and Society* 32, no. 1 (2003); Heidy Sarabia, "Organizing 'Below and to the Left': Differences in the Citizenship and Transnational Practices of Two Zapatista Groups," *Sociological Forum* 26, no. 2 (2011). On sweatshops and labor rights, Mark Anner and Peter Evans, "Building Bridges across a Double Divide: Alliances between US and Latin American Labour and NGOs," *Development in Practice* 14, no. 1–2 (2004); Andrew Battista, *The Revival of Labor Liberalism* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2008). On solidarity with Eastern Europe, Natalie Bégin, "Kontakte

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Although these two approaches rarely engage in a direct dialogue, there are interesting complementarities and tensions between them. On the one hand, the empirical studies of moral engagement across distance reaffirm the practical validity of the philosopher's concerns. By highlighting concrete political activities, they show how real people are indeed moved by deep questions of morality.[3] On the other hand, they also complicate the moral philosophers' relatively neat discursive universe. Empirical studies remind us that ideas about solidarity and moral affiliation do not exist in a social vacuum. The concrete individuals who subscribe to and act on such ideas and beliefs are situated in concrete political and social contexts, react to particular events, and are exposed to various information flows from communication media. A persistent commitment to one's ethical ideals involves contesting and engaging with organizations or political authorities of various kinds, as well as working to change the general moral climate and prevailing cultural understandings of right and wrong. And, significantly, putting moral ideas to practice means confronting the practical dilemmas and challenges of coordinated collective action: disseminating information, raising consciousness, recruiting adherents, generating and maintaining their commitment, making decisions on tactics, organizing protests and rituals, and facing repression and persecution. Thus next to moral philosophy's analytical precision and conceptual insights, the social scientist's typical preoccupations and sensitivities enrich our understanding of the complex processes through which ideas of moral affiliation across space are activated in concrete practices.

The recognition of this complexity, however, almost by default leads to the standard procedure that had dominated the field of social movement research: the in-depth study of individual cases of public mobilization around distant issues. Only a close investigation of a case can reveal the multiple interlocking processes involved in a complex social phenomenon. At the same time, gains from the knowledge of individual instances come with certain losses. Taken out of the larger comparative context, even the most fine-grained empirical study of one or few individual cases would miss important causal dynamics. Students of social movements have long recognized the complex way in which individual instances of mobilization are interconnected in time and space. The

zwischen Gewerkschaften in Ost und West: Die Auswirkungen von 'Solidarnosc' in Deutschland und Frankreich," *Archiv für Sozialgeschichte* 45 (2005); Kim Christiaens, Idesbald Goddeeris, and Wouter Goedertier, "Inspirées par le Sud? Les mobilisations transnationales Est-Ouest pendant la guerre froide," *Vingtième Siècle* 109 (2011). On the baby formula boycott, James E. Post, "Assessing the Nestlé Boycott: Corporate Accountability and Human Rights," *California Management Review* 27, no. 2 (1985); Kathryn Sikkink, "Codes of Conduct for Transnational Corporations: The Case of the WHO/UNICEF Code," *International Organization* 40, no. 4 (1986).

[3] A strong case for the importance of moral commitment in collective action is made by James M. Jasper, *The Art of Moral Protest: Culture, Biography, and Creativity in Social Movements* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1997); Smith, *Resisting Reagan*.

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organizational structures that initiate popular mobilization form a relatively autonomous social field. There are important interactions within this field even between units with diametrically opposed political and social agendas, including the spread of distinctive organizational forms. Temporally, mobilization events cluster in waves and cycles as, for example, "spin-off movements" arise out of other instances of mobilization.[4]

These related analytical moves form a part of a more general interest within sociology to understand the temporal interconnectedness of events and, more importantly, establish the causal inferences that can be derived only from this interconnectedness.[5] This is where, for my purposes, history matters. For if we want an answer to the general question of why and how people mobilize to act on behalf of distant strangers, an understanding, however fine-grained, of the conditions and factors that shape individual instances of such mobilization is not sufficient in itself. These individual instances must be placed in a larger historical sequence of developments, which reveals an important causal dynamics.

Consider, for example, a case that brings forth a complex web of organizational and cultural continuities in the long-term history of other-directed popular mobilization. Between 1904 and 1913, a large number of ordinary people were mobilized in Britain to condemn the forced labor and gruesome cruelties inflicted on Africans in the so-called Free Congo State created by Leopold II, the King of Belgians. The Congo Reform Association organized numerous public meetings and set up local auxiliaries, as well as sister movements in the United States, Germany, France, Norway, and Switzerland.

[4] See, e.g., Joseph R. Gusfield, "Social Movements and Social Change: Perspectives of Linearity and Fluidity," *Research in Social Movements, Conflict and Change* 4 (1981); Doug McAdam, "'Initiator' and 'Spin-Off' Movements: Diffusion Processes in Protest Cycles," in *Repertoires and Cycles of Collective Action*, ed. Mark Traugott (Durham: Duke University Press, 1995); Peter Stamatov, "The Religious Field and the Path-Dependent Transformation of Popular Politics in the Anglo-American World, 1770–1840," *Theory and Society* 40 (2011); Sidney Tarrow, "Cycles of Collective Action: Between Moments of Madness and the Repertoire of Contention," in *Repertoires and Cycles of Collective Action*, ed. Mark Traugott (Durham: Duke University Press, 1995); "Studying Contentious Politics: From Event-ful History to Cycles of Collective Action," in *Acts of Dissent: New Developments in the Study of Protest*, ed. Dieter Rucht, Ruud Koopmans, and Friedhelm Neidhardt (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 1999); Charles Tilly, *Popular Contention in Great Britain, 1758–1834* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1995); Nancy Whittier, "The Consequences of Social Movements for Each Other," in *The Blackwell Companion to Social Movements*, ed. David A. Snow, Sarah A. Soule, and Hanspeter Kriesi (Malden: Blackwell, 2004); Mayer N. Zald and John D. McCarthy, "Social Movement Industries: Competition and Cooperation Among Movement Organizations," *Research in Social Movements, Conflict and Change* 3 (1980).

[5] Andrew Abbott, *Time Matters: On Theory and Method* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001); William H. Sewell, Jr., "Three Temporalities: Toward and Eventful Sociology," in *The Historic Turn in the Human Sciences*, ed. Terrence J. McDonald (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1996).

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Perceptive readers will notice that I am referring to some of the developments covered in Adam Hochschild's moving – and well-deservedly popular – book *King Leopold's Ghost*.[6] When it comes to the discovery and popularization in Europe and America of the Congo issue, Hochschild's account seems to attribute the "heroism" in his book title to two important, complex, and colorful figures involved in the Congo Reform Association: the shipping clerk Edmund Dene Morel and the diplomat Roger Casement. Yet a closer look at the specifics of the mobilization of public opinion qualifies the central importance of these strong individuals and reveals instead how the campaign was deeply embedded in a long-standing and persistent organizational culture of humanitarian mobilization.

Edmund Morel, the chief promoter of the campaign against the Congo atrocities, was not acting alone. He was connected with a group of British merchants trading with West Africa who were critical of British and European imperial policies because of an ideological commitment to free trade. The campaign began to take shape when a somewhat uneasy alliance emerged between these free traders and the head of an older humanitarian organization, H. R. Fox Bourne of the Aborigines Protection Society. The popular outreach that Morel envisioned only became a reality after the Quaker cocoa merchant William Cadbury made a significant financial contribution to the Congo Reform Association in 1905 and facilitated contacts with the Society of Friends, whose long-standing antislavery committee embraced the issue and, in turn, mobilized local Quaker structures. Finally, the true engine of popular mobilization turned out to be evangelical missionaries with firsthand experience of the "heart of darkness" in Leopold's Congo. Not only were they able to shape the official report produced by Roger Casement that authoritatively framed the issue in Britain; using newly available photographic techniques, they provided pictorial proof of the atrocities and, most importantly, organized a series of speaking "atrocity" tours in Britain. The missionaries' lantern slide presentations in churches mobilized wide religious constituencies that provided the backbone of the Congo reform agitation.[7]

This is not to say that the drive and dedication of an individual like Edmund Morel was of no importance. Yet equally – if not more – important was a whole cast of "supporting" characters that did the less visible legwork to produce the popular commitment needed for a campaign like this. And, what is more important for my purposes, all relevant actors were shaped – in various ways – by a long-standing and persistent organizational culture of antislavery

[6] Adam Hochschild, *King Leopold's Ghost: A Story of Greed, Terror, and Heroism in Colonial Africa* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1998).

[7] See Kevin Grant, *A Civilised Savagery: Britain and the New Slaveries in Africa, 1884–1926* (New York: Routledge, 2005). Grant's treatment is an insightful correction of earlier accounts that credited Morel as the only significant driving force behind the campaign. See, e.g., Wm. Roger Louis, "The Triumph of the Congo Reform Movement, 1905–1908," *Boston University Papers on Africa* 2 (1966).

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humanitarianism. I trace, in the second half of this book, the initial consolidation of this culture around the turn of the nineteenth century out of an international abolitionist network. A century later, this culture was in decline compared to the glory days of antislavery mobilization in the 1830s when a large movement had demanded the immediate abolition of slavery in British colonies. Even at its nadir, however, it continued to exercise important formative effects.

Three overlapping groupings created the Congo atrocities campaign: free traders, Quakers, and evangelical Christians. All three were conditioned by ideological commitments and organizational experience that were the persistent sediment of previous antislavery struggles. Quakers, as we will see, were the pioneers of politicized antislavery. Both the antislavery committee of the Society of Friends and the Aborigines Protection Society, since its foundation in 1837 by Quaker Thomas Hodgkin, were the continuing organizational embodiment of a distinct Quaker humanitarian tradition of long roots. Evangelicals, both from the official Church of England and from nonconformist denominations, were early adopters of antislavery principles and because of their religious and political muscle gradually emerged as the dominant force in the antislavery field. With its emphasis on converting non-Europeans, the evangelical version of humanitarianism was at tension with the humanitarianism of non-conversionist Quakers. Still, the central role of missionaries in the Congo campaign was, in important ways, the result of the close alignment of missions and antislavery since at least the 1820s. Like the Quakers, the free traders – and Morel himself – had deep misgivings about missionary enthusiasm. What is more, they simply did not share the religious concerns of their Quaker and evangelical allies. But in many ways the larger free-trade movement had been influenced by a preexisting culture of antislavery and religious reformism. When it first emerged – and spread internationally – as a coherent political project with the Anti-Corn Law League of the 1840s, its originators copied both the organizational models of the antislavery movement and its typical moralistic framing of a public issue, if only to take advantage of the committed constituencies that powered religious associations at the time.[8]

[8] On the Aborigines Protection Society, see Amalie M. Kass and Edward H. Kass, *Perfecting the World: The Life and Times of Dr. Thomas Hodgkin, 1798–1866* (Boston: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1988); Ronald Rainger, "Philanthropy and Science in the 1830's: The British and Foreign Aborigines' Protection Society," *Man* 15, no. 4 (1980); Charles Swaisland, "The Aborigines Protection Society, 1837–1909," *Slavery & Abolition* 21, no. 2 (2000). The increasing identification between missionary evangelicalism and antislavery is discussed by Roger Anstey, "Religion and British Slave Emancipation," in *The Abolition of the Atlantic Slave Trade: Origins and Effects in Europe, Africa, and the Americas*, ed. David Eltis and James Walvin (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1981); Andrew Porter, *Religion versus Empire? British Protestant Missionaries and Overseas Expansion, 1700–1914* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2004); C. Duncan Rice, "The Missionary Context of the British Anti-Slavery Movement," in *Slavery and British Society, 1776–1846*, ed. James Walvin (London: Macmillan, 1982); Mary Turner, *Slaves and Missionaries: The Disintegration of Jamaican Slave Society, 1787–1834*

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Thus, apart from various situational and proximate causes that lent the Congo atrocities movement its historically specific trajectory, all its relevant actors were also influenced by an important distal factor: the strong organizational culture of antislavery. It is this culture that made them think of distant atrocities as a social problem that had to be addressed urgently. And because of the history of political mobilizations this culture had produced, it provided these actors with the standard tools and technology to address the problem.[9]

HISTORY IN THE PRESENT

Nor has history ceased to matter for later instances of distant-issue mobilization – a fact that has been obscured by a tendency to isolate a post–World War II transnational humanitarianism as a distinctly novel phenomenon with no history. Consider, for example, the rhetoric of a historian describing the "human rights revolution" of the 1970s in the "journal of record" of American historians. According to this account, centered on the pioneering role of Amnesty International, it is at this time that human rights activists "discovered the importance of the fact-finding mission," "devised ways to collect accurate accounts of some of the vilest behavior on earth that no one had bothered to document before," "invented ways to move this information to wherever activists had some chance to shame and pressure the perpetrators," and "learned how to purchase public support through icons and mass media."[10]

As we will see, this sharp rhetoric of invention, discovery, and novelty is misleading. It assigns to distant twentieth-century successors – and, yes, imitators – a credit that is better claimed by some of the protagonists of this book: the Catholic friars of the sixteenth century or Anthony Benezet and Thomas Clarkson two centuries later. The incautious presentism in the phrases excerpted

(Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1982). On the tensions between the Quaker and evangelical versions of antislavery and humanitarianism, see Zoë Laidlaw, "Heathens, Slaves and Aborigines: Thomas Hodgkin's Critique of Missions and Anti-slavery," *History Workshop Journal* 64, no. 1 (2007). The religious origins of the Anti-Corn Law League are explored by Paul A. Pickering and Alex Tyrell, *The People's Bread: A History of the Anti-Corn Law League* (London: Leicester University Press, 2000); Donald Read, *The English Provinces, c. 1760–1960: A Study in Influence* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1964), 134–36.

[9] It is hardly incidental that for his next project Hochschild explored the sources of this organizational culture. See Adam Hochschild, *Bury the Chains: Prophets and Rebels in the Fight to Free an Empire's Slaves* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2005). For the centrality of the same organizational tradition in the anti-apartheid movement at an even later stage, see Thörn, *Anti-Apartheid*, 75–76.

[10] Kenneth Cmiel, "The Emergence of Human Rights Politics in the United States," *Journal of American History* 86, no. 3 (1999). A somewhat more temperate account appeared five years later: "The Recent History of Human Rights," *American Historical Review* 109, no. 1 (2004). For another treatment emphasizing uncritically the unprecedented novelty of Amnesty International, see Ann Marie Clark, *Diplomacy of Conscience: Amnesty International and Changing Human Rights Norms* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001).

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in the preceding paragraph, however, is indicative of a general scholarly fascination with historical discontinuities in the study of mobilizations around distant issues, often understood as deeply connected with recent processes of "globalization" and "transnationalism."

These discontinuities have been emphasized in different ways. Thus, for example, Peter Evans characterizes transnational networks of alternative globalization as a "new weapon" for the globally underprivileged. Florence Passy draws a strong contrast between a charity-oriented humanitarianism of the past and an organizationally coherent "solidarity movement" that, emerging with the "new middle classes" of the 1960s and their "new social movements," is bold enough to make "genuine" political claims. And even when acknowledging important continuities between the past and present of transnational campaigns, scholars are often tempted to focus on the unprecedented organizational sophistication of contemporary global civic initiatives, thus clearly separating them from historical precedents.[11]

This drift toward a discontinuist analytical framework is perhaps not surprising. Recent cases of public mobilization around the rights of distant strangers are simply more cognitively available than older historical instances that often demand specialized knowledge – and more research hours. Furthermore, these recent cases easily fit the logic of a scholarly attention cycle where, after decades of measuring and predicting the "modernization" of analytically isolated national "societies," social scientists increasingly turned toward interactions cross-cutting previously unproblematic nation-state borders.

Yet there are analytical advantages to be gained from considering the continuities and similarities with the past. Audie Klotz has highlighted, for example, the parallels between the nineteenth-century antislavery movement and the transnational mobilization against apartheid in the 1980s. Both mobilized around a surprisingly similar normative agenda, sought a far-ranging political, economic, and cultural transformation by addressing both national governments and international organizations, recruited constituents across national boundaries, and had an important religious dimension.[12]

[11] See Peter Evans, "Fighting Marginalization with Transnational Networks: Counter-Hegemonic Globalization," *Contemporary Sociology* 29, no. 1 (2000); Florence Passy, "Political Altruism and the Solidarity Movement: An Introduction," in *Political Altruism? Solidarity Movements in International Perspective*, ed. Marco Giugni and Florence Passy (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2001). For accounts sensitive to important continuities, see Margaret E. Keck and Kathryn Sikkink, *Activists Beyond Borders: Advocacy Networks in International Politics* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1998); Ronnie D. Lipschutz, "Reconstructing World Politics: The Emergence of Global Civil Society," *Millennium* 21, no. 3 (1992); Dieter Rucht, "Transnationaler politischer Protest im historischen Längsschnitt," in *Globalisierung, Partizipation, Protest*, ed. Ansgar Klein, Ruud Koopmans, and Heiko Geiling (Opladen: Leske + Budrich, 2001).

[12] Audie Klotz, "Transnational Activism and Global Transformations: The Anti-Apartheid and Abolitionist Experiences," *European Journal of International Relations* 8, no. 1 (2002).

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Nor are these similarities surprising if we look at the mechanics of popular support. The general pattern is remarkably uniform: an initial nucleus of "issue entrepreneurs" discover the problem and then turn to preexisting organizations to elicit wider support. This was true for the Congo atrocities campaign in early twentieth-century Britain, for the movements of international solidarity of the 1980s, and – as we will see – for the very beginnings of the politicized antislavery movement in the late eighteenth-century British Empire.[13] Two centuries of technological advances since then have sped up communications and reduced connectivity costs. Yet when it comes to the setting up of the specialized organizations that orchestrate public support for distant issues and the specific activities for which these organizations mobilize supporters, activists continue to use some variation of a set of organizational routines that crystallized in the early nineteenth century.[14]

Furthermore, in both aspects – the initial discovery of an issue and in the orchestration of organizational support – religion continues to play an important role. Religious actors and organizations are prominent among the initiators and carriers of postwar transnational and human rights organizations. Even in a typically "secular" European state like Germany, approximately one-third of organizations providing development aid to the Third World are church-based.[15]

What, then, if we focus not on the discontinuities but on the remarkable persisting patterns that still continue to inform action on behalf of distant strangers? As we will see, the parallels and continuities between older and newer instances of politicized action oriented toward distant strangers become even more striking when we give these older cases the careful attention they deserve. But the point, of course, is not simply to temper the ahistorical enthusiasm for the present with somber reminders of *plus ça change*. No doubt, a lot has changed between now and the early sixteenth century when the analytical narrative of this book starts. Yet highlighting and exploring such continuities and similarities that persist against the grain of historical change is a useful entry point into understanding how our present – and the world as we know it – came to be. They give us a glimpse into the deeper causal processes and

[13] On the organizational inception of the Central America solidarity movement and anti-apartheid, see Nepstad, *Convictions of the Soul*; Skinner, *Foundations of Anti-Apartheid*; Smith, *Resisting Reagan*.

[14] Charles Tilly, "Social Movements and National Politics," in *Statemaking and Social Movements: Essays in History and Theory*, ed. Charles Bright and Susan Harding (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1984).

[15] Klotz, "Transnational Activism," 59–60; Lowell W. Livezey, "US Religious Organizations and the International Human Rights Movement," *Human Rights Quarterly* 11, no. 1 (1989); Claudia Olejniczak, "Entwicklungspolitische Solidarität: Geschichte und Structure der Dritte Welt-Bewegung," *Forschungsjournal Neue Soziale Bewegungen* 11, no. 3 (1998); Jackie Smith, Ron Pagnucco, and Winnie Romeril, "Transnational Social Movement Organisations in the Global Political Arena," *Voluntas* 5, no. 2 (1994): 130.

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